



Izembek National Wildlife Refuge

A Special Place in Alaska!

- Izembek National Wildlife Refuge was established to conserve waterfowl, shorebirds and other migratory birds, brown bears, and salmon.
- At 417,533 acres, Izembek is the smallest Alaskan refuge, but it's still half the size of Rhode Island.
- Habitat in the refuge ranges from the ocean waters of the Bering Sea and Pacific Ocean to the 9,000 foot summits of active volcanoes, and includes coastal lagoons; open tundra interspersed with numerous lakes, ponds and streams; thickets of alder brush; and barren, glacier-topped mountains.
- 300,000 acres were designated as the Izembek Wilderness Area in 1980 when Congress passed the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA).
- The 150 square mile Izembek Lagoon complex, the centerpiece of Izembek Refuge, was the first U.S. site designated as a "Wetland of International Importance" in 1986.



The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service manages 16 national wildlife refuges in Alaska, or nearly 82% of the National Wildlife Refuge System acreage.

Izembek National Wildlife Refuge
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Pavlof Volcano during the 1996 eruption.

- In 1936 Izembek Lagoon was named after the surgeon aboard the Russian sloop *Moller*, which traveled around the world from 1826 to 1829.
- The State of Alaska designated the submerged lands and tidelands of Izembek Lagoon as the Izembek State Game Refuge in 1972.
- Nearly all of the world's population (approx. 135,000 birds) of Pacific black brant, thousands of Taverner's Canada geese and a rich diversity of other waterfowl converge on Izembek Refuge each fall to feed in the extensive eelgrass beds.
- Each spring and fall the entire world's population of more than 62,000 emperor geese migrate through Izembek, with several thousand stopping to stay through the winter.
- Some 500 to 600 tundra swans remain year-round on Izembek Refuge.

- The most common wintering duck is the colorful Steller's eider, a threatened species which nests on the arctic coasts of Alaska and Siberia, and molts at Izembek Lagoon in September.
- Over 185 species of birds and 30 species of mammals have been observed on, or adjacent to, the four refuge units administered by Izembek Refuge. Birds come from breeding grounds in Russia, Canada and other parts of Alaska.
- Brown bears are abundant, feeding at streams rich with thousands of spawning sockeye, chum, coho, pink, and king salmon. Densities of bears on streams can be as high as six bears per square mile, among the highest known to occur.
- Other mammals on Izembek include the Southern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd, moose, wolves, red fox, river otter, mink, and wolverine.
- Marine wildlife found in the coastal waters includes gray, killer and minke whales; walrus, Steller sea lions, harbor seals, and sea otters.
- The active 9,372 ft. Shishaldin Volcano was designated a Registered National Historic Landmark in 1968, under the Historic Sites Act of August 21, 1935, for its near perfect cone shape. It has been used as a navigation aid for centuries.
- Izembek Refuge experiences an average yearly wind speed of 18 miles per hour and 36 inches of precipitation; visitors should expect to encounter extreme weather situations, but enjoy the unparalleled opportunities to experience beauty, solitude, challenge, and adventure.